

# MEDIA RELEASE

## NEW PARTNERSHIP FORMED TO ENHANCE HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY IN THE PACIFIC

**30 August 2018, SUVA: A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' (OHCHR) and the Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) seeks to enhance advocacy efforts on Human Rights in the Pacific and fulfill mutual commitments to ensuring that no one is left behind. The MoU was signed during a co-organised Talanoa session by OHCHR and PIDF on *"Integration of Human Rights in the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)"* and focused on the linkages between Human Rights and the SDGs, specifically from a Pacific perspective.**

PIDF recognises human rights as a major component for sustainable development in the Pacific as it helps build the social fabric of society, build confidence and trust of individuals, and improve the quality of life of individuals that can live in peace, flourish and prosper and that without addressing Human Rights challenges, it will be difficult to envision sustainable and inclusive societies in the Pacific.

"Human Rights are not only important for achieving SDG's, it is also one of the conditions for accelerating progress towards the achievement of the entire SDG agenda, in critical areas for the Pacific, in terms of advocacy, securing the rights of people with specific disabilities, rights of people affected by environmental disasters, and human rights outreach and education, which have been incorporated in PIDF's MoU with OHCHR today", said PIDF Secretary General, François Martel.

The PIDF Secretary General said during the MoU signing that at the regional level, PIDF will continue working with OHCHR to promote and include human rights in PIDF's work for sustainable Blue/Green Economies in the Pacific and assist in supporting PIDF members in integrating human rights in their efforts to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

"The OHCHR has proved itself an important global forum to mobilize key stakeholders not just for global advocacy, but to utilise such platforms as this Talanoa to build partnerships and discuss important human rights issues in the Pacific and the challenges we face", further commented Secretary General Martel.

"Let me take this opportunity to congratulate and thank the OHCHR team for co-organizing the very first yet vital Talanoa with our PIDF Team and as you can see from this Talanoa that PIDF and OHCHR have already started collaborating and working together and this MoU signing is now an important formalisation of the partnership", he further added.

Secretary General Martel concluded by saying that we live in a world of changes so profound and rapid that no country can stand alone. The world's interlinked threats and challenges require everyone to share responsibility and contribute to a common vision, and nowhere is this more profound than in the Pacific region with its encroaching effects of climate change leading to climate induced migrations and the need to emphasize how important it is to ensure the protection of human rights of those affected through climate induced migration, environmental rights and how human rights can support Pacific Island Countries achieve their SDG targets .



Chitrlekha Massey, Regional Representative, UNOHCHR and PIDF Secretary General during the MoU signing at the conclusion of the co-organised Talanoa on *Integration of Human Rights in the achievement of the SDGs*.

\*\*\*\*\*ENDS\*\*\*\*\*

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Sustainable Pacific  
Society*

The PIDF is a multilateral and multi-stakeholder organization focusing on a distinctive Pacific model of green growth in blue economies aligned to sustainable development principles. The PIDF also serves as the Pacific Islands south-south cooperation platform with the United Nations and is a member of the Inter-agency Collaborative Group on the Global Partnership on SIDS. We are a space for catalysing, mobilizing and mainstreaming action in support of sustainable development through green/blue economy in Pacific Island Countries. PIDF is an action-oriented platform to identify innovative solutions and works closely with international institutions to engage state and non-state actors to develop high-impact collaborations on sustainable development & poverty reduction in the Pacific Islands.